



March 2006

## FIBRE

Fibre is the part of food, that is not completely digested by our body. It is only found in plant foods such as **cereals, breads, vegetables, fruits, legumes** and **nuts**. Wholegrain/unrefined varieties of these foods are excellent sources of fibre.

Eating a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and wholegrain cereals is the best way to get enough fibre to keep us healthy.

### A Diet High in Fibre:

- ◆ Helps with regular bowel function
- ◆ Helps prevent constipation
- ◆ May protect against bowel disease and
- ◆ May protect against heart disease later in life

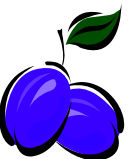
A high fibre diet only partly helps to prevent constipation. You also need to:

- ◆ Increase your fluid intake, preferably by drinking lots of water. Aim for at least 6 glasses of fluid each day.
- ◆ Ensure a well-balanced diet by eating a wide variety of foods from all food groups. Also eat regular meals and snacks.
- ◆ A high fibre diet is a wholesome and nutritious diet suitable for your whole family to follow.
- ◆ Exercise regularly. Walking is one of the best forms of exercise.
- ◆ Promote good toileting practices by encouraging your child to use the toilet regularly

### How much fibre does my child need?

An easy way to decide how much fibre is enough for your child is to take your child's age and add between 5 and 10 (**Age + 5 or Age + 10**) eg. If your child is 5 years old then they will need between 10g-15g fibre per day.

Too much fibre can limit a child's appetite and prevent the absorption of some nutrients. The use of bran to increase fibre is not recommended.



# How To Get More Fibre in Your Diet

- ◆ Use wholegrain, wholemeal or dark rye breads.
- ◆ Choose wholemeal cereals eg. Weet-bix, Vita-brits, porridge, natural muesli.
- ◆ Try wholemeal pasta or rice.
- ◆ Eat fresh or dried fruit (including the skin).
- ◆ Eat a wide variety of vegetables (including the skin where possible).
- ◆ Include pulses, legumes, lentils & nuts eg. kidney beans, baked beans, peanut butter, split peas, chick peas. (Whole nuts are not suitable for children under 5)
- ◆ Select biscuits containing wholemeal flour, rolled oats, bran & seeds.
- ◆ Substitute healthy high fibre snacks such as fruit, raw vegetables, wholegrain crackers in place of chips, sweet biscuits, cakes and soft drinks.
- ◆ Modify your favourite recipes by using wholemeal flours, grains, dried fruits.



FIBRE IN FOODS		
Food	Serve	Fibre (g)
Legumes (Baked Beans)	1/2 cup	7
Green Peas	1/2 cup	5
Wholemeal Pasta	1/2 cup	4
Pear	1 average	4
Broccoli	2 pieces	4
Weet-bix	2 biscuits	3
Apple or Banana	1 average	3
Peanut Butter	1 tablespoon	3
Sweet-corn	1/2 cup	3
Cauliflower	2 pieces	3
Orange	1 average	2
Carrot	1/2 cup	2
Wholemeal Bread or Rye Bread	1 slice	2
Porridge (rolled oats)	1/2 cup	2
Potato	1 average	2
White Pasta, or Brown/White Rice	1/2 cup	1
Muesli	1/2 cup	1
White Bread, Crumpet or Muffin	1 slice	1